

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2911

INFO AMEMBASSY LA PAZ PRIORITY

PANCANAL

USCINCSO

UNCLAS PANAMA 5335

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: OTRA, PINT, PN, BO

SUBJECT: BOLIVIAN PRESIDENT ARRIVES IN PANAMA

SUMMARY: PRESIDENT BANZER ARRIVED IN PANAMA JULY 25 FOR A THREE DAY VISIT. BANZER COMPLETED THE STANDARD ROUND OF CEREMONIAL ACTIVITIES MONDAY AFTERNOON AND WILL ATTEND A COUNCIL OF STATE MEETING TUESDAY. TORRIJOS AND BANZER WILL ISSUE A JOINT COMMUNIQUE REITERATING PANAMA'S SUPPORT FOR A BOLIVIAN OUTLET TO THE SEA AND BOLIVIA'S SUPPORT FOR PANAMA ON THE CANAL. MEDIA REACTION TO THE VISIT HAS BEEN EXTENSIVE AND FAVORABLE. END SUMMARY.

1. BOLIVIAN PRESIDENT HUGO BANZER, ACCOMPANIED BY HIS FAMILY AND A LARGE OFFICIAL PARTY, ARRIVED AT TOCUMEN AIRPORT YESTERDAY AFTERNOON. AFTER A WELCOMING CEREMONY BY PRESIDENT LAKAS AND CHIEF OF GOVERNMENT OMAR TORRIJOS, BANZER WAS WHISKED AWAY TO AN AFTERNOON OF WREATHLAYING FOLLOWED BY A STATE DINNER HOSTED BY PRESIDENT LAKAS. THERE WAS NO ARRIVAL STATEMENT.

2. PRESIDENT BANZER WILL ATTEND A COUNCIL OF STATE MEETING IN SANTIAGO, VERAGUAS PROVINCE ON JULY 26. THIS IS UNCLASSIFIED

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INTENDED TO GIVE HIS A FIRST-HAND LOOK AT INTERACTION BETWEEN THE GOP AND REPRESENTATIVES OF LOCAL GROUPS. BANZER WILL ALSO MEET WITH TORRIJOS AND OTHER GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS TO DISCUSS A JOINT COMMUNIQUE TO BE ISSUED BY THE TWO LEADERS PRIOR TO BANZER'S DEPARTURE WEDNESDAY. BOLIVIA WILL LIKELY REITERATE ITS SUPPORT FOR PANAMA'S POSITION ON THE CANAL AND OFFER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN DEVELOPING MINERAL RESOURCES. PANAMA

IS EXPECTED TO DECLARE ITS SUPPORT FOR BOLIVIA'S EFFORT TO OBTAIN AN OUTLET TO THE SEA AND TO REAFFIRM COOPERATIVE TECHNICAL AND CULTURAL AGREEMENTS CONCLUDED AT EARLIER MEETINGS.

3. MEDIA COVERAGE OF BANZER'S VISIT IS EXTENSIVE. ALL PAPERS FRONT-PAGE ARRIVAL STORIES AND PHOTOS. FAVORABLE COMMENTARY IN EDITORIALS AND OPINION COLUMNS EQUATES BOLIVIA'S STRUGGLE TO RECOVER AN OUTLET TO THE SEA WITH PANAMA'S EFFORTS TO GAIN CONTROL OF THE RESOURCE EMBODIED IN HER GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION. "MATUTINO" EDITORIAL SEES THE COMMON DENOMINATOR UNITING BOLIVIA AND PANAMA AS "THE ANGUISH SHARED BY A BOLIVIA THAT IS DROWNING IN LAND AND A PANAMA THAT CONNECTS TWO OCEANS WITH A CANAL THAT IT DOES NOT OWN".

4. ONLY DISCORDANT NOTES IN THIS HARMONY HAVE BEEN A FEW STREAMERS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PANAMA CHARACTERIZING BANZER AS A "FACIST PIG" AND A MURDERER, AMONG OTHER THINGS. THE LEFTIST "GUAYKYCHO" STUDENT GROUP TOOK CREDIT FOR THESE INSPIRATIONS.

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Message Attributes

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Subject: BOLIVIAN PRESIDENT ARRIVES IN PANAMA SUMMARY: PRESIDENT BANZER ARRIVED IN PANAMA JULY 25 FOR A THREE DAY VISIT. BANZER COMPLETED THE STANDARD ROU
TAGS: OTRA, PINT, PN, BL, (BANZER SUAREZ, HUGO)
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